

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 27, 2011

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 4, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 815

**Introduced by Assembly Member Brownley
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member John A. Pérez)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alejo, Ammiano, Carter, Eng,
Furutani, Gatto, Roger Hernández, Lara, Ma, and Williams)**

February 17, 2011

An act to add Article 6 (commencing with Section 51460) to Chapter 3 of Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to instructional programs.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 815, as amended, Brownley. Instructional programs: State Seal of Biliteracy.

Existing law sets forth various requirements for the issuance of diplomas conferred upon a pupil as evidence of graduation from high school. Statutory provisions establish the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma for the purpose of recognizing pupils who have mastered the high school curriculum.

This bill would establish the State Seal of Biliteracy to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. The State Seal of Biliteracy would be awarded by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with specified criteria. The Superintendent would be required to prepare and deliver to participating school districts the seal insignia. Participating school

districts would be required to maintain records in order to identify pupils who have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy; *and* to affix an appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of pupils who earn a State Seal of Biliteracy; ~~and, to the extent practicable, to develop outreach strategies and an application process in order to ensure that pupils know about the State Seal of Biliteracy.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to encourage excellence for
4 all pupils, and the Legislature wishes to publicly recognize pupils
5 for exemplary achievements in academic studies.

6 (b) The study of world languages in elementary and secondary
7 schools should be encouraged because it contributes to a pupil's
8 cognitive development and to our national economy and security.

9 (c) Proficiency in multiple languages is critical in enabling
10 California to participate effectively in a global political, social,
11 and economic context, and in expanding trade with other countries.

12 (d) The demand for employees to be fluent in more than one
13 language is increasing both in California and throughout the world.

14 (e) The benefits to employers in having staff fluent in more than
15 one language are clear: access to an expanded market, allowing
16 business owners to better serve their customers' needs; and the
17 sparking of new marketing ideas that better target a particular
18 audience and open a channel of communication with customers.

19 (f) It is the intent of the Legislature to promote linguistic
20 proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more languages in
21 addition to English and to provide recognition of the attainment
22 of those needed and important skills through the establishment of
23 the State Seal of Biliteracy. A State Seal of Biliteracy would be
24 affixed on the high school diplomas or transcripts of graduating
25 pupils attaining proficiency in one or more languages in addition
26 to English.

27 SEC. 2. Article 6 (commencing with Section 51460) is added
28 to Chapter 3 of Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education
29 Code, to read:

Article 6. State Seal of Biliteracy

51460. (a) The State Seal of Biliteracy is established to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. The State Seal of Biliteracy shall be awarded by the Superintendent. School district participation in this program is voluntary.

(b) The purposes of the State Seal of Biliteracy are as follows:

- (1) To encourage pupils to study languages.
- (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy.
- (3) To provide employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills.
- (4) To provide universities with a method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants seeking admission.
- (5) To prepare pupils with 21st century skills.
- (6) To recognize and promote foreign language instruction in public schools.
- (7) To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community.

51461. (a) The State Seal of Biliteracy certifies attainment of a high level of proficiency by a graduating high school pupil in one or more languages, in addition to English, and certifies that the graduate meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) Completion of all English language arts requirements for graduation with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or above in those classes.
- (2) Passing the California Standards Test in English language arts administered in grade 11 at the proficient level or above.
- (3) Proficiency in one or more languages other than English, demonstrated through one of the following methods:
 - (A) Passing a foreign language Advanced Placement (AP) examination with a score of 3 or higher or an International Baccalaureate examination with a score of 4 or higher.
 - (B) Successful completion of a four-year high school course of study in a foreign language, and attaining an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above in that course of study.

1 (C) Passing a district language examination that, at a minimum,
2 assesses speaking, reading, and writing in a language other than
3 English at the proficient level or higher.

4 (D) Passing a foreign government's approved language
5 examination, and receiving a receipt of a certificate of competency
6 from the authorizing government agency.

7 (E) Passing the SAT II foreign language examination with a
8 score of 600 or higher.

9 (b) If the primary language of a pupil in any of grades 9 to 12,
10 inclusive, is other than English, he or she shall do both of the
11 following in order to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy:

12 (1) Attain the early advanced proficiency level on the English
13 language development test. For purposes of this paragraph, a
14 participating school district may administer the CELDT an
15 additional time as necessary.

16 (2) Meet the requirements of subdivision (a).

17 (c) For languages in which an AP test is not available, the
18 Superintendent shall provide a listing of equivalent summative
19 tests that school districts may use in place of an AP test for
20 purposes of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a).

21 (d) For purposes of this article, "foreign language" means a
22 language other than English, and includes American Sign
23 Language.

24 51462. The Superintendent shall do both of the following:

25 (a) Prepare and deliver to participating school districts an
26 appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of
27 the pupil indicating that the pupil has been awarded a State Seal
28 of Biliteracy by the Superintendent.

29 (b) Provide other information it deems necessary for school
30 districts to successfully participate in the program.

31 51463. A school district that participates in the program under
32 this article shall do all of the following:

33 (a) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who
34 have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy.

35 (b) Affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript
36 of each pupil who earns a State Seal of Biliteracy.

37 ~~(c) To the extent practicable, develop outreach strategies and~~
38 ~~an application process in order to ensure that pupils know about~~
39 ~~the State Seal of Biliteracy.~~

1 51464. It is the intent of the Legislature that no fee be charged
2 to a pupil pursuant to this article.

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